SCAFFOLDING FOR EXTERNAL REPAIRS.

AMONG the doings elsewhere, which you occasionally notice in your valuable columns as suggestions to us to go and do likewise, permit me to add one which, if adopted here, would prevent much inconvenience and expense.

A denizen of Moorgate-street, I have frequently contrasted the contrivances, either laborious or perilous, which are *here* resorted to to paint the façades of the houses, with the simple, secure, and inexpensive appliances by which the same office is performed in the Rue Royale at Brussels. In the fronts of the houses *there* may be observed a row of rosettes or other similar ornaments. These rosettes are the tops or heads of plugs, which, when repairs are necessary, are withdrawn, and short poles or yards inserted into them: from these is suspended a substantial platform, which can be lowered to any extent required, and on which the workman carries on his craft with ease and security. True, the fronts are quite flat in Brussels; but it would be derogatory to our artisans to suppose that the projection of cills, balconies, or porticoes are insuperable difficulties.

Where these plug-holes do not exist, the expense of making them would, probably, be more than saved on the first avoidance of the erection of scaffolding. OBSERVER.

HOUSE AGENTS' AND BUILDERS' DISPUTES.

LAMBETH COUNTY COURT.—*Buckland v. Warner.*—The plaintiff, a house-agent of Walworth, sought to recover 10*l.* of the defendant, who is a builder, for commission on the sale of two houses to a person of the name of Taylor.

The plaintiff said he was employed by Mr. Warner to sell two houses, and that he introduced a Dr. Wellborne to the defendant as a purchaser, but they could not agree as to price. The doctor, after this, named the houses to a friend of his of the name of Taylor, who eventually became the purchaser at 205*l.* The defendant had agreed to give him 10*l.* if he found a purchaser. He considered that as he introduced Dr. Wellborne, who found a purchaser, he was as much entitled to the commission as if the doctor had himself bought the houses.

Dr. Wellborne was then called, who supported the evidence of the plaintiff, and he further stated that he was in company one day at the Queen's Arms, public-house, with Mr. Taylor, the purchaser, and the defendant. That the defendant told Taylor to go to the plaintiff, who would agree with him as to price; and that Mr. Taylor would not have been introduced to the defendant if the plaintiff had not spoken to witness about the houses.

Mr. Taylor was next called.—He stated that he was introduced to the defendant by Dr. Wellborne, and purchased the houses at 205*l.*

Mr. E. T. Smith, solicitor, of St. Martin's-court, cross-examined this witness, who swore that no such conversation as that spoken to, by the doctor took place; that Mr. Buckland's name was never mentioned, and that he had nothing to do with the plaintiff.

Mr. E. T. Smith, solicitor, submitted to the jury that the contract to pay 10*l.* commission, was conditional in two respects. Firstly, on Dr. Wellborne's becoming the purchaser; and, secondly, at the defendant's price. He would show that the plaintiff sought out his client, and induced him to promise him the commission, on a representation that Dr. Wellbourne would become the purchaser of the houses. That at this time the defendant had already placed his houses in the hands of another house agent to dispose of. That he would not have employed the plaintiff except to sell to the doctor, and that when that negotiation went off, he ceased to recognise the plaintiff as his agent. He urged that no fresh contract was proved to have been made with reference to Taylor becoming the purchaser. The jury could not imagine the many attempts made upon builders by house-agents for fictitious commissions, it not unfrequently happening that six or a dozen different agents would send in claims for douceurs or commissions, each asserting that he introduced the purchaser through a friendly doctor or somebody. Mr. E. T. Smith then called Mr. Warner, who stated, that after Dr. Wellborne declined to purchase, the plaintiff called upon him and stated that he should require 15*l.* If Mr. Taylor became the purchaser, 10*l.* for himself, and 5*l.* for the doctor. He at once declined paying that sum, upon which plaintiff said, "Well, I shall take Taylor to some other property, and you may consider the matter off." He, witness, replied, "Very well, be it so." That when Mr. Taylor afterwards came to witness to purchase the property, he said, "If you come to me through Buckland, I must decline negotiating."

Mr. Bussell, in reply, contended that Taylor would not have known of the property but for his client, and that plaintiff, according to the usages of the trade, was entitled to his claim.

The judge left it to the jury, who found for the defendant. Verdict for defendant and costs.

ILL-USAGE TO WORKMEN.

BROMPTON COUNTY COURT.—SKELTON *v.* DALRYMPLE.

THE plaintiff in this action is one out of a number of workmen lately employed in taking down the Crystal Palace, who have been compelled to sue the defendant for labour, and breach of contract. The workmen mustered outside the court in great numbers.

Mr. Skelton said he undertook to take up a certain bay of flooring at the same rate as other men, but no fixed price was stated. For this he was paid. Before he could remove this flooring, it became necessary to take from the surface an immense weight of iron columns and other debris. He asked defendant for the job, and he agreed to give him 8*l.* to remove it. He had only received 8*s.* 3*d.* There was no written contract. It took thirty-two men eleven days to remove it. He was not the only man by many who had been served in the same way, and who had been obliged to summon the defendant. He called a witness, who confirmed his statement.

The defendant, who throughout appeared to treat the claim with some contempt, for which he was rebuked by the Court, said the plaintiff certainly asked him for the contract, but no price was named. He told the plaintiff to bring in his estimate, but he had not done so. He could not say the work was not done, but he did not know what was done. He had 400 men on the job, and it was not possible for him to see to every particular.

Mr. Pakenham, said he heard plaintiff ask for the contract, and Mr. Dalrymple tell him to furnish an estimate, and that, in his opinion, there were only 58 tons removed. They paid so much per ton.

His honour, Adolphus, said, it was a very loose way of employing men. The defendant could not say what was done, although he appeared to know the plaintiff was removing the materials. The plaintiff ought to be paid something, and his order would be for 6*l.* and costs.

Subsequently the plaintiff came into court and stated that being ignorant of the practice of the Court, he had suffered the defendant to leave without paying him his wages. He had been to Mr. Dalrymple, for the money, who laughed at him, and said he would have his revenge now, as he was not compelled to pay him until Nov. 3. He lived at Blackwall, and considered it very cruel for working men to be served in this way, and he had lost a whole month in trying to get his money. He had pledged every valuable to pay the Court fees, and he thought there was no justice to be had for poor men.

The Chief Clerk said he was sorry the Court could not further assist him.

The plaintiff said the defendant would have left the neighbourhood before Nov. 3rd, and it was a chance if he got one farthing.

THE WEIGHT THAT CAN BE TRUSTED ON A PILE.

WE find the following rule for calculating the weight that can be safely trusted upon a pile which is driven for the foundation of a heavy structure, by Major Saunders, in "The Journal of the Franklin Institute."

A simple empirical rule, derived from an extensive series of experiments in pile driving, made in establishing the foundation for Fort Delaware, will doubtless prove acceptable to such constructors and builders as may have to resort to the use of piles, without having an opportunity of making similar researches. I believe that full confidence may be placed in the correctness of this rule, but I am not at present prepared to offer a statement of the facts and theory upon which it is founded.

Suppose a pile to be driven until it meets such an uniform resistance as is indicated by slight and nearly equal penetrations, for several successive blows of the ram; and that this is done with a heavy ram (its weight at least exceeding that of the pile), made to fall from such a height that the force of its blow will not be spent in merely overcoming the inertion of the pile, but at the same time not from so great a height as to generate a force which would expend itself in crushing the fibres of the head of the pile. In such a case it will be found that the pile will safely bear, without danger of further subsidence, "as many times the weight of the ram as the distance which the pile is sunk the last blow is contained in the distance which the ram falls in making that blow, divided by eight." For example, let us take a practical case, in which the ram weighs one ton and falls 6 feet, and in which the pile is sunk half an inch by the last blow; then as half an inch is contained 144 times in 72 inches, the height the ram falls, if we divide 144 by 8, the quotient obtained, 18, gives the number of tons which may be built with perfect safety, in the form of a wall, upon such a pile.

Notices of Books.

Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society. Taunton: May. London: Bell. 1852.

THE Somersetshire Archæological History Society have published their proceedings during the year 1851 in a well-looking and well-illustrated volume. As the papers contained in it have for the most part been quoted or noticed in our pages at the time, it will be unnecessary to particularise them now; but we must mention that there are, in addition to various lithographs, two very good outline engravings, from drawings by Mr. F. T. Dollman, of the reredos lately discovered at the east end of the Ladye Chapel, in St. Cuthbert's Church, Wells; and the reredos in Tanner's Chapel, mentioned by us some time ago, when we visited the church. With respect to the former, accidentally found by the removal of some panelling, Mr. Ferrey says "that the design was most magnificent; the grouping of the niches being of peculiar richness, and the execution of the whole work exceedingly delicate and beautiful. The centre of the lower range of niches is larger than the others, and probably contained the figure of the Virgin: the grouping of the canopy was very different to the others, and was much richer. The centre of the upper range of niches may probably have contained the figure of our Saviour; the sacred monogram being there several times introduced. In this, as in the other, the niches were found filled with the fragments of figures, all more or less mutilated, and with their faces turned to the wall, to give a smooth surface for the plastering by which they were concealed from view. In one of the windows on the north side of the chancel, which had been filled up to receive some plastering and panelling, were also found an immense number of fragments of figures, canopies of niches, pinnacles, and other ornamental portions . . . many of them of great beauty, and the colouring and gilding were as fresh and bright as though only recently executed. . . . . The reredos in Tanner's Chapel is, as I think, of later date than the other . . . . . the design of it has not so much variety, the niches being similar in every instance, and the execution not so good in some respects: a portion of it has been entirely destroyed."

Plague and Pestilence in the North of England in the Middle and Later Ages. By G. BOUCHIER RICHARDSON, F.S.A. Newcastle.

THIS essay was the subject matter of a memoir recently read before the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It has been printed in an enlarged form, and with a sanitary purpose, at the suggestion of Mr. Rawlinson, Superintending Inspector of the General Board of Health. It contains details of dread and instructive interest as to the ravages of plague and pestilence in Newcastle and elsewhere, in former times, and as to the obvious causes of the recurrence of these fearful epidemics. From the narration here given, it will be seen that our forefathers were by no means ignorant of the causes referred to, and did much under imperfect police and municipal regulations to keep their towns "sweet and clean,"—at all events (as we still do) when too late as a pre-

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